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In the course of our Aeronautic Expedition we met with the following tale, translated from an ancient Indian Manuscript, entitled, "The flowers of Hindustan."— Upon the style and matter, we make no comments. We have somewhat abridged its original form.

In the city of ~~Bagdad~~ Balora, there lived a sail maker, whose name was Aba-hapan. He was extremely poor, and had a wife and ~~two~~ children to support. This he found very difficult to do, and the discontented disposition of Serendiva, his wife, rendered his life still more uncomfortable.

He was one day walking along the sea-shore, having been to sell his sails,

when he met with a man of venerable appearance, & a long white beard, who thus accosted him. "Abu-Hassan, I "know thy poverty, and thy misfortunes. "I know also the disposition of thy wife "I am disposed to assist thee; but on "this condition, that you do not let "your wife know any thing about the "means I shall employ."

Abu Hassan promised to keep the secret. The stranger then gave him a girdle, and immediately disappeared. Abu-Hassan thought he was only mocked. He returned home however, and having examined the girdle, could find nothing of value that it contained. He therefore laid it by, and pursued his occupation, amid the murmurs of his partner. One day, however, having occasion for a small piece of leather, he stepped up stairs, and taking the girdle, began to cut a part of it off, when to his unutterable amazement,

three fine diamonds fell out, together with a bit of parchment, containing the inscription —

"The reward of Contentment."

Notwithstanding his joy & astonishment, he concealed it from his wife, and having locked up again the precious girdle, he went to the jewellers to dispose of his property. The artificer was struck with their beauty, and immediately gave him a high price for them, with a promise of the same for more.

Abu-Hapan returned to his wife, and poured the sequins into her lap. She was struck dumb with surprise; & when at length she found utterance, he would not be prevailed upon to gratify her curiosity with regard to the source of their riches.

The next day Abu-hapan hired a more commodious house. He bought furniture, & slaves. His friends & acquaintances were surprised at the

alteration in his circumstances; but to all he observed the same provoking silence about his riches. Report at last began to murmur that he had not come honestly by them; which at length reaching the ears of the Cadi, Abu-hassan deemed it most expedient to fly from Balsora.

He accordingly embarked by night in a vessel bound to Chunbar, taking with him no other property but his precious girdle, much to the discomfort of his wife, who could not but regret the fine house she had left. They had not been out however at sea, many days, when the winds began to rise, the sea to swell in mountains around them, and the vessel to tremble in the midst of the waves, unmindful of the helm. They at length struck on a rock, & every soul on board perished, except Abu-Hassan, who found himself wonderfully supported by the girdle

which he wore round his body, and which wafted him along the surface of the water for a long time. On the second day after his wreck, he descried a sail in the horizon; he redoubled his exertions, and soon came up to it. The crew were of a very dark complexion, well made, with the exception that their eyes were where the mouth should be, & their mouths in their foreheads. Abu-hajan was struck with horror. They took him on board, and having surveyed him with wonder, were about to chain him, when no sooner had they touched the wonderful girdle, than the chains burst to pieces, & killed some of the people. They therefore desisted, & taking Abuhajan into the cabin, set refreshments before him. A person, who understood Abu-Hajan's language then accosted him, & told him, that the men were a part of the nation called Atavachians, who

dwelt in a large island in the southern ocean; that their king, who resided in Patava, the capital of the country, had fitted out this vessel with orders to seize all the whites & Mahometans they could meet with, in order to serve up a grand repast which was shortly to be made, on the occasion of the festival of their God Atavacho, which was celebrated once in ten years. He also informed Abuhapan, that he must not hope for escape, for that there were magicians in Patava, who would infallibly discover the mystery of the girdle & baffle it. Abu-hapan however, only laughed at their threats; and being convinced that no ordinary fate impended over him, he determined to make no resistance to wherever they might convey him.

After a long, but prosperous

voyage, the Atavachian vessel arrived at a small village on the coast of the country of Atavachiat, and the crew having landed proceeded immediately to Patava. Abu-Hajan now remarked for the first time that he was not the only captive the monsters had taken, but that there were above a hundred fellow prisoners with him. They all seemed sad & pensive, while he alone was cheerful.

They at length reached Patava. The city was built in a square form, surrounded by immense walls, & broad & deep ditches. Over these last five hundred bridges of copper were thrown, leading to as many gates of the purest silver in the walls. The cavalcade halted on the beginning of one of the bridges, & gave a signal to the city. The gate corresponding,

immediately flew open, and a chorus of a thousand trumpets rent the air. An immense number of warriors also lined the ramparts, and soon after all the gates opening, multitudes of the inhabitants rushed out, dressed in white, every person with a small banner in his hand.

The cavalcade now set forward to the town. They entered; and every thing Abu-Hassan saw, filled him with astonishment. The private houses of the inhabitants resembled rather palaces. The palaces themselves were more magnificent than he had ever witnessed in his own country. The roofs were of gold, & the walls & columns sparkled with diamonds; trees of the loveliest verdure were every where visible, and birds of the most melodious voices were heard warbling from their emerald leaves.

The prisoners were conducted to a large castle, where they were entertained with every luxury for several weeks. Abuhapan took every opportunity to bid his companions be of good cheer, promising to deliver them from their misfortunes. In the mean time, a council of all the priests & nobles was held, to consider the wonderful relation they had heard of Abu-hapan. The magicians were set to work to discover the secret which hung over him; but to no purpose. They were unable even to calculate his nativity.

The day before the festival, as Abu-Hapan was about to retire to rest, the stranger who had given him the girdle, suddenly appeared to him. "Abu-Hapan," said he, "fear nought:- "demand tomorrow to be conducted to "the ditch which surrounds the city, "and then throw your girdle into it. "The Atavachians will then deem your

"power lost; the magicians deceived by
"false appearances, will pronounce you
"incapable of doing harm. In the
"mean time take this rod, & concealing
"it till you arrive at the place of
"execution, wave it in the air. Be
"not apprehensive for the rest."

The morning came. Abu-hapan made his request, and going to the ditch, did as the stranger had bade him. He was then reconducted to the prison, and the procession of prisoners & priests set out for the great square, amid the acclamations of the multitude, who deemed Aba-Hapan terrified into submission.

They arrived at the great square of the city. It was of immense extent; surrounded by magnificent palaces, & in the midst a great altar, on which a large fire was made, and which was surrounded by sumptuous tables prepared for the horrible repast of

human flesh which was soon to take place.

The sound of an innumerable quantity of martial instruments proclaimed the approach of the idol, the king, & his attendants. The idol, Atavaiko, was a large black statue, twenty cubits in stature, made of a peculiar composition of brass & iron. He was placed on a ~~lofty~~ lofty car, with four wheels, & surrounded by a hundred priests, dressed in red robes. The car was drawn by twelve black elephants. The king, on a sumptuous vehicle, followed the god, and behind him, a stupendous concourse of nobles, & other attendants, on horseback.

The elephants having drawn the car ~~to~~ close to the altar, were unharnessed, slain, and lain upon the altar. A fire which the priests had kindled within the idol, now blazed

forth from the hideous mouth & eyes of Avatacho. Again the air resounded with the horrible roar of ten thousand trumpets. The people set up a shout, sufficient to shake every house in the city. The priests then proceeded to lead the victims up to the altar, and to offer one of them as a propitiatory sacrifice to their deity, by putting him into the yawning mouth of the idol, & suffering him to fall into the fire beneath. One of the Mahometans was accordingly seized; when at the instant Abu-Hassan waved his rod, which he had hitherto carefully concealed. At once the immolators & the god fell together to the dust. At once the sound of the trumpets died away, & to the awful silence which immediately followed, succeeded the shriek of death. The fire, ~~bursting~~ bursting from the altar, left uninjured the Mahometans,

while it consumed in one common devastation every other being that it found in its destructive way. A sudden madness seizing the people, caused them to draw their weapons, & to make an indiscriminate massacre of one another; so that in a short space not a living human being was left in the city, except the captives. Those who had attempted to escape over the walls, found themselves dashed back by an invisible hand, & shared the common desolation.

The captives, thus delivered from a horrible death descended from the altar, blessing their deliverer. As they gazed upon him, a thick vapor enveloped every thing around them, so much that they could not distinguish one another. In this state they remained upwards of an hour, when they heard strains of most delightful music, & the cloud clearing away,

disclosed a wonderful spectacle to their eyes. The altar & the dead bodies & other wrecks had totally disappeared, and in their place stood a beautiful chariot, drawn by twelve milk white horses, & surrounded by an innumerable guard of youths habited in white, in which stood a young lady of exquisite beauty. As for themselves, they found that they had been clothed by some hand unseen in splendid habiliments; & particularly Abu-Hassan. The music ceased, & the whole crowd gave an universal shout. Its joyful sound reached the heavens, & reverberated to the ears of the Houris. The region of the spheres trembled with the vibration, and the angels stopped to hear the occasion of it.

A small white cloud began shortly to appear in the sky. As it drew nearer, it expanded into a car,

the wheels of which were formed of burning fire, and drawn by the courses of the skies. It reached the place where the spectators stood. A form, resplendent with the bloom of paradise, leaped from its impalpable support. Around him was thrown a robe, partly dipped in the cerulean dye of heaven, & partly bleached with the intense light of the sun. As he descended, every head bowed in homage. He came near Abu-Hassan.

"Youth" – said he – "I am the "venerable stranger who appeared to "you before. I assumed that form for "purposes which I shall explain to you.

"The city of Balsora was, a hundred "years ago, the most flourishing & the "most magnificent city in the world. "Its commerce was unlimited, & its "vessels were to be seen in every part of "the world. It was at the same time

"the most devoted to the Prophet of any
"place in the world. But idolaters
"coming in, they profaned the pure
"worship of the rest, and established
"idolatry in the kingdom. I, who am
"called Patambad, was the guardian
"genius of the royal family. I raised
"their kingdom to such a pitch of
"greatness, as never was known before.
"But they, like the rest, shook off
"their faith; and as I was one of
"the genii who had not revolted,
"I determined to punish them. I
"accordingly devoted the whole of the
"royal family to death, except two.
"The first, the young lady you there
"see, not being immediately related
"to the king, I cast into a deep sleep,
"retaining her beauty, until the time
"of her deliverance should arrive;
"the other was the son of the king,
"whom I transported to Balsora, &
"causing him to forget every circumstan

"of his past life, he became a sail-
"maker. [redacted]. The
"worst part of the people I destroyed,
"and casting all the young and
"beautiful into a deep sleep with
"the princes, I buried them in an
"immense vault under ground. A
"neighboring nation of idolators next
"invaded the kingdom, and putting
"most of the inhabitants to the
"sword, sacrificing & devouring others,
"they established themselves here. In
"the mean time, a malicious genie
"desirous of effecting the eternal
"ruin of the place, accomplished a
"spell, which bound the misfortunes
"on it, until a descendant of the
"king should arrive as a sacrifice
"in Patava to the God Atavacho. I
"however, had determined to restore
"the country to its former state. I
"therefore endeavoured to preserve the

"line of descent. The prince, whom I
"removed, & who was to have espoused
"the princess before you, was your
"ancestor. Seventy times have I saved
"your life & that of your ancestors
"from the power of the evil genie
"Soverscha. It was he that kept you
"poor, and endeavored to deprive you
"of a contented disposition, which he
"had made one of the requisites in
"the deliverer of Patava; he spread
"the rumor of your dishonesty; he
"shipwrecked the vessel in which you
"embarked; I saved you, and conducted
"you to the vessel of the Atavachians,
"placed you in the road of your
"task. The evil spirit is finally
"defeated. As for you, you must
"now assume the reins of government
"The other captives which were with
"you, are the descendants of those
"who escaped from the Atavachians; a

"I had made it a part of the
"punishment of the unfortunate
"race, that the Atavachians should
"devour no others but them, and
"that they should always, in some
"way or other, become a prey to
"their enemies, to whatever country
"they might fly, until the period
"appointed for the completion of
"their punishment.

"Your name in future must be
"Serenan; that of the princess is
"Alavate. Let your nuptials be
"celebrated to morrow."

The genie paused. The air was again rent with acclamations, & Patambad leading Serenani to the car of the princess, hailed him king.

The morrow arrived. The lovely & blushing Alavate had made too deep an impression on Serenan to

~~for~~ him to feel the least degree of objection to the match. They were married publicly amid the rejoicings of thousands: and in the midst of the most sumptuous entertainments the most ravishing music, & the combined sound of voices & trumpets, commenced a reign, the most glorious & the most beloved that Patava ever saw.

When the ceremony was over, Patambad departed in his blazing car, and left the once poor & destitute Abu-Hassan, now the powerful prince Serenan, possessor of ~~his father's~~ the throne of his fathers, of a beautiful bride, & of a people, in whose hearts he reigned, & whose lives were at his service.

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